

Message Text

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ACTION EB-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 IO-14 ISO-00 AGR-20 CEA-02 CIAE-00

COME-00 DODE-00 FRB-02 H-03 INR-10 INT-08 L-03 LAB-06

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 AID-20 CIEP-02 SS-20

STR-08 TAR-02 TRSE-00 USIA-15 PRS-01 SPC-03 OMB-01

DRC-01 /193 W

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R 200820Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7281

INFMERUESRB/AMEMBASSY BELGRADE 2281

USMISSION BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

IUUFHBS/USMISSION EC BRUSSELS 0230

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USMISSION OECD PARIS

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, RO

SUBJ: ROMANIAN CUSTOMS TARIFF

REFS: (A) BUCHAREST 2296; (B) BUCHAREST A-175; (C) GENEVA 3116

1. NEW ROMANIAN CUSTOMS TARIFF SCHEDULE, TO GO INTO EFFECT ON A PROVISIONAL BASIS 1 JAN 1974, HAS JUST BEEN PUBLISHED. SCHEDULE AS PRINTED CONTAINS ONLY ONE COLUMN OF DUTY LEVELS, HENCE ON THE SURFACE APPEARS TO APPLY TO IMPORTS FROM ALL COUNTRIES AND DOES NOT IMPOSE HIGHER DUTIES ON COUNTRIES NOT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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GRANTING ROMANIA MFN STATUS. ROMANIAN TEXT BEING POUCHED

TO DEPARTMENT.

2. SOME RAW MATERIALS SUCH AS IRON ORE AND COKE HAVE BEEN EXEMPTED FROM DUTY, AND RATES ON OTHERS, SUCH AS COTTON, WOOD PULP AND CATTLE HIDES ARE FIVE PER CENT AD VALOREM OR LESS. RATES ON FINISHED PRODUCTS AND EQUIPMENT, HOWEVER, ARE QUITE HIGH, GENERALLY FALLING BETWEEN 40 AND 60 PER CENT AD VALOREM. THIS LATTER GROUP INCLUDES SUCH ITEMS AS INDUSTRIAL EQUIPMENT, ENGINES (GASOLINE, DIESEL AND ELECTRIC), RAILWAY EQUIPMENT INCLUDING LOCOMOTIVES AND CARS, AUTOMOBILES, TRUCKS, TRACTORS, MOTORCYCLES, AIRPLANES, SHIPS, MARINE TOOLS AND COMPONENTS, AND ELECTRIC AND ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT AND COMPONENTS, INCLUDING DATA PROCESSING EQUIPMENT. CEREALS CARRY DUTIES OF 10 PERCENT OR BELOW. DUTIES ON FOOD IMPORTS GO ALL THE WAY FROM 10 PERCENT FOR BEEF AND PORK TO 80 PERCENT FOR BUTTER, THE RATE USUALLY BEING HIGHER FOR PROCESSED AND SEMI-PROCESSED PRODUCTS.

3. COMMENT: ONE RATIONALE GIVEN BY GOR FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW CUSTOMS TARIFF SCHEDULE IS TO IMPROVE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DOMESTIC PRICES AND WORLD PRICES. EFFECTIVELY, HOWEVER, TARIFFS WILL ADD ANOTHER ELEMENT OF STATE CONTROL OVER IMPORT OF WHAT GOR CONSIDERS ESSENTIAL AND NON-ESSENTIAL GOODS, AND WILL IMPROVE ROMANIA'S BARGAINING POSITION FOR RECIPROCAL TARIFF TREATMENT. FURTHERMORE, DISCUSSION WITH MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE OFFICIALS THROWS DOUBT ON WHAT ROMANIANS DESCRIBE AS NON-DISCRIMINATORY TARIFF. MIN FOR TRADE SOURCES SAY TARIFFS WILL NOT REPEAT NOT APPLY TO IMPORTS FROM SOVIET UNION OR OTHER COMECON COUNTRIES ALTHOUGH THIS FACT NOT STATED IN PUBLISHED TARIFF. (REASON GIVEN BY ROMANIANS IS THAT THESE COUNTRIES, EVEN THOUGH SOME HAVE INSTITUTED CUSTOMS TARIFFS, DO NOT APPLY THEM ON IMPORTS FROM ROMANIA; ROMANIAN FREE CUSTOMS TREATMENT WILL THEREFORE BE RECIPROCAL.) IF THIS PROVES TO BE THE CASE IN PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF CUSTOMS TARIFF THERE WOULD APPEAR TO BE ELEMENT OF DISCRIMINATION BETWEEN COMECON COUNTRIES AND GATT CONTRACTING PARTIES. ANOTHER ITEM NOT COVERED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BY LAW BUT RELATED VERBALLY BY GOR OFFICIALS IS AUTHORITY RESERVED BY MIN FOR TRADE TO ESTABLISH SEPARATE RATES FOR IMPORTS FROM THOSE COUNTRIES WHICH DO NOT ACCORD RECIPROCAL TREATMENT (READ MFN) TO ROMANIA. IN ANY CASE, DEPENDING ON HOW TARIFFS WILL ACTUALLY BE PUT IN EFFECT, THERE IS DISTINCT POSSIBILITY OF ADVERSE EFFECT FOR WESTERN COUNTRIES IN GENERAL AND PERHAPS EVEN GREATER UNFAVORABLE IMPACT ON U.S. INTERESTS IN PARTICULAR.

MARTENS

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